

I CLAIM:

1. A call screening device adapted to interconnect a facsimile machine and a telephone line, said call screening device comprising:

5 a switch circuit adapted to be connected to the facsimile machine and the telephone line; and

a controller coupled electrically to said switch circuit and adapted to be connected to the telephone line, said controller including

10 a data storage unit for storing telephone numbers, an incoming call detector adapted to detect a caller telephone number associated with an incoming call on the telephone line, and

15 a comparator unit for making a comparison between the caller telephone number detected by the incoming call detector and the telephone numbers stored in said data storage unit, and for controlling said switch circuit to make or break connection between the facsimile machine and the telephone line according to result of the comparison made by said comparator unit.

20 2. The call screening device of Claim 1, further comprising a keypad coupled electrically to said controller and operable so as to input the telephone numbers to be stored in said data storage unit.

25 3. The call screening device of Claim 2, further comprising a display unit coupled electrically to and controlled by said controller to show the caller

telephone number thereon.

4. The call screening device of Claim 3, wherein said keypad is further operable so as to enable said controller to review the telephone numbers stored in said data storage unit and to control said display unit to show a reviewed one of the telephone numbers thereon.

5. The call screening device of Claim 2, wherein said controller further includes a dual-tone multi-frequency signal generator for generating a dual-tone multi-frequency signal corresponding to the telephone number shown on said display unit for call back purposes.

6. The call screening device of Claim 1, further comprising a display unit coupled electrically to and controlled by said controller for showing selected ones of the caller telephone number and the telephone numbers stored in said data storage unit thereon.

7. The call screening device of Claim 1, wherein said incoming call detector includes a dual-tone multi-frequency decoder for detecting the caller telephone number that is associated with the incoming call on the telephone line.

8. The call screening device of Claim 1, wherein said controller normally operates in a sleep mode, and further includes a tone detector that is adapted to detect presence of an incoming tone signal on the telephone line, and to wake said controller from the sleep mode upon detection of the incoming tone signal.

5

10

15